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Operational activities for development: operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Advancement of women

Activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, prepared pursuant to Assembly resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984.

Summary

The present report provides a review and update of the programme and activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for the years 2004-2006, with a particular emphasis on 2006. The report tracks overall progress and highlights concrete results in the implementation of the UNIFEM multi-year funding framework 2004-2007 during the years under review. The report concludes with a set of recommendations on the ways in which the development effectiveness and organizational effectiveness of UNIFEM can be further strengthened.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a review and update of the programmes and activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for 2004-2006. It tracks progress made and highlights concrete results in the cumulative implementation of the first three years of the UNIFEM multi-year funding framework, 2004-2007 (DP/2004/5 and Corr.1), with a particular emphasis on findings for 2006. It concludes, in chapter IV, with a set of recommendations, based on the annual review undertaken by the Consultative Committee of UNIFEM, on ways in which the effectiveness of UNIFEM can be further strengthened.

2. 2006 was the final year of the three-year term of the members of the Consultative Committee (Canada, Jordan, Mexico, Niger and Slovenia). In 2007 new members of the Consultative Committee (Estonia, Jordan, Mexico, Norway and Sudan) began their term. The new Committee, chaired by Estonia, has provided valuable guidance and advice to the Fund.

3. While UNIFEM contributes to the achievement of reported results, changes at the outcome level represent the efforts of multiple actors, including national partners in Government and non-governmental organizations. The Fund plays the role of facilitator, advocate, technical adviser and convenor in achieving the results reported below, together with programme countries and often with United Nations partners, bilateral donors and other actors.

II. Development effectiveness

4. The strategic results framework is comprised of four goals and four outcomes. The four goals are as follows: (a) reducing feminized poverty; (b) ending violence against women; (c) reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls; and (d) achieving gender equality in democratic governance. The results in the UNIFEM strategic results framework are drawn from commitments that countries have made and the priorities they have identified. Many partners contribute to results related to gender equality; when progress is made, it is because they are wholly owned and propelled by the programme countries where UNIFEM provides support.

A. Outcome 1
Legislation and policies at the national and regional levels are formulated and implemented to promote and protect women's human rights

5. Gender equality advocates have addressed the needs to promote and protect women's human rights at the national and regional levels by pressing for removal of discriminatory provisions of existing laws and policies and for the introduction of a legal framework aligned with commitments to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[1] and other international and regional normative frameworks.

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

6. The Fund contributed to strengthening legal and policy frameworks in 89 countries, including through the following: removing gender-discriminatory provisions in seven countries; introducing or implementing laws and policies that promote women's rights in 38 countries and in two regional bodies; strengthening gender-equality provisions in constitutions in 5 countries; and mobilizing new or additional resources for gender equality by bringing a stronger gender equality perspective to national development strategies and/or poverty reduction strategies in 13 countries. The Fund, with other United Nations partners, provided support to 72 countries to report on and/or develop capacity in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, with a particular emphasis on regional programmes in South and South-East Asia, the Arab States and the Pacific.

Gender equality plans, policies and laws

7. Over the period of the multi-year funding framework, UNIFEM increased support to ensure that national action plans that promoted gender equality were incorporated into national development strategies, poverty reduction strategies and Millennium Development Goal strategies and, where possible, costed. The Fund also supported progress towards the creation, approval or stronger implementation of national gender equality plans, policies or laws in 27 countries[2] during the period.

8. A number of good practices are emerging. UNIFEM has brought together advocates working on national action plans with organizations working on gender-responsive budgeting to strengthen the results orientation of the work at the national level. The support UNIFEM provided to develop national action plans in Afghanistan, Ecuador, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Uruguay in 2006 was linked to sector ministries' strategies, which will eventually translate into operational programmes with budgets.

Sector-specific laws and policies

9. In addition to overarching gender equality plans, laws and policies, UNIFEM supports sector-specific legal and policy work related directly to its four goals.

10. The Fund contributed to progress in reducing feminized poverty through support for 50 efforts in 36 countries over the past three years, working with national and United Nations partners. It focused on the following specific groups of women workers: (a) rural women with respect to access to land, in the Commonwealth of Independent States; (b) women home-based workers and women in the informal economy, including women migrant workers in Asia and the Arab States; (c) indigenous and Afro-descendant workers in Latin America; women producers in countries recovering from armed conflict; and women affected and infected by HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa.

[2] Countries supported in the period 2004-2006 included the following: Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Burundi, Ecuador, Dominica, Georgia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kosovo (Republic of Serbia), Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Moldova, Montenegro, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Philippines, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Uruguay, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

11. With regard to ending violence against women, UNIFEM contributed to increasing numbers of laws and policies on violence against women, registering progress in 35 countries in 2006.[3] Approximately 40 per cent focused on domestic violence, 30 per cent on general violence against women legislation, 15 per cent on trafficking and sexual violence respectively, and approximately 5 per cent on female genital mutilation and sexual harassment.

12. The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women launched a revised strategy in 2005 focused on grants to support implementation in countries that have laws, policies and plans to address violence. Managed by UNIFEM, the Trust Fund has supported 43 projects on implementing laws and policies in 38 countries in the past three years. A cross-cutting evaluation methodology will be applied to assess Trust Fund grants in order to share lessons on effective strategies for accelerating implementation and enhancing accountability.

13. In the area of democratic governance, UNIFEM works with a wide range of United Nations agencies, most often the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), to assist national partners to assess the need for, draft, pass and implement positive action laws and policies for women's political participation, including in post-conflict countries. During the period of the multi-year funding framework, such assistance was provided in 14 countries and regionally in the context of the Declaration by the Heads of State or Government of the Southern African Development Community on Gender and Development.

14. The Fund's efforts to mainstream gender equality in poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and sector-wide approaches have involved working closely with other United Nations organizations to give gender equality advocates a voice in poverty reduction strategy and national development strategy processes and to secure increased budget allocations for gender-sensitive interventions. In 2006, UNIFEM supported 18 efforts related to poverty reduction strategies in Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Caribbean. The Fund is increasingly linking its work on gender-responsive budgeting to assist partners in collecting evidence that supports the inclusion of gender equality in those mainstream processes. The Fund has not engaged substantively with sector-wide approaches in the multi-year funding framework period, but plans to document innovative efforts that support gender equality.

Lessons learned and key challenges

15. The gap between legal and policy changes and their implementation remains significant. During the multi-year funding framework period, UNIFEM supported the generation of better evidence to support stronger implementation and accountability, especially through gender-responsive budgeting and support for analysing and disseminating sex-disaggregated data. An intensified focus is needed to develop national capacity to support, track and assess implementation and accountability in all aspects of work on gender equality. A stronger focus on linking normative changes at the national, regional and global levels with local customary

[3] Including through the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, administered by UNIFEM.

laws and policies is needed, since those linkages more often determine options and opportunities for women and girls.

B. Outcome 2
Mainstream institutions demonstrate leadership, commitment, technical capacity and accountability for gender equality

16. Moving from commitment to implementation and accountability for gender equality means that the mainstream institutions that generate policies and services for their intended constituencies need to develop capacity and accountability at all levels for delivering to women and girls.

17. At the heart of effective gender mainstreaming in any institution is the challenge of reshaping incentive systems to support better responses to the needs of women, changing performance measures so that actions to meet their needs are recorded and rewarded, incorporating gender-responsive budgeting and institutionalizing effective leadership to champion gender equality and women's rights.

18. In its work on outcome 2, UNIFEM tracks progress towards the following four indicators: (a) the increased use of sex-disaggregated data to devise and monitor gender-responsive policies; (b) the extent to which policies, programmes and resource allocations of regional, national and local organizations are consistent with gender equality; (c) the extent to which Millennium Development Goal processes, common country assessments or United Nations development assistance frameworks and peacekeeping missions reflect commitments to gender equality; and (d) support for gender equality initiatives from United Nations country teams and multilateral development banks.

19. In the last three years, UNIFEM documented catalytic initiatives in 86 countries in outcome area 2.

Sex-disaggregated data

20. The focus on the Millennium Development Goals has increased interest in generating more specific measurements of gender equality. During the multi-year funding framework period, UNIFEM supported initiatives to bring a gender equality dimension to Millennium Development Goal processes in 42 countries and in four regions, including through executing a five-country project for UNDP and through close partnerships with United Nations regional economic commissions. The Fund helps countries to use and disseminate sex-disaggregated data particularly through regional strategies and in the context of United Nations partnerships. The Fund contributed to multi-stakeholder initiatives in 22 countries in 2006. Regionally, UNIFEM partnered with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to generate sex-disaggregated data and analysis to support country-based reporting on the Millennium Development Goals; with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to support dissemination of the African Gender and Development Index in countries throughout the region; with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to launch a prototype database to track progress on gender equality for member States; with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to launch *The Story Behind the Numbers. Women*

and Employment in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Commonwealth of Independent States, a publication on the economic status of women in the region. The Fund's strategy in Central America, for instance, hinges on fostering South-South exchange so that statistics institutes in the region can benefit from the significant progress in tracking gender equality issues that the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics in Mexico has registered.

Policies, programmes and resource allocations of mainstream organizations

21. The Fund focuses on changes in policies, programmes and resource allocations in institutions related to its four goals. Cutting across all of them is the work on gender-responsive budgeting, which has grown both as a technical tool and as a movement. At the end of 2000, 42 countries had instituted gender-responsive budgeting initiatives. As of 2006, UNIFEM had identified an additional 33 countries that had engaged in some form of gender-responsive budgeting.[4]

22. The Fund played a key role in generating attention for and capacity in gender-responsive budgeting as a tool for accountability and in public sector reform. From 2004 to 2006, UNIFEM provided support in 41 countries, compared to 22 countries during the period of its previous multi-year funding framework. In the current period, initiatives supported by UNIFEM included 14 focused at the national level, 8 focused at the local level and 11 geared to both local and national levels. In an additional eight countries work is in the preliminary stages. Intensive programming on gender-responsive budgeting has shown that it is possible to institutionalize it in the policies and practices of ministries of finance, thereby influencing resource allocations in support of gender equality. In the past four years, UNIFEM contributed to efforts by the ministries of finance in Ecuador, Egypt, India, Morocco, Senegal and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to launch initiatives to mainstream gender equality into the annual budget processes of line ministries.

23. At the national, regional and global levels, the Fund also works with key institutions — for instance, ministries of labour in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) — that influence decision-making in areas related to feminized poverty, such as ending violence against women (including with ministries of justice and/or law enforcement agencies and with UNFPA and UNICEF), reducing HIV/AIDS (with UNAIDS, UNFPA and UNDP) and democratic governance (often with UNDP). Its work on HIV/AIDS is illustrative. UNIFEM works with and through United Nations inter-agency thematic groups on HIV/AIDS to link national AIDS councils with gender equality advocates and women infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. From 2004 to 2006, UNIFEM contributed to mainstreaming gender into the plans and policies developed by national AIDS councils in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ecuador, Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Thailand, Togo and Zimbabwe and worked with an additional 19 national AIDS councils to provide training in gender analysis and women's human rights-based approaches.

24. The Fund supports stronger gender equality capacity in the institutions that contribute to peacebuilding as well as in those that are critical to post-conflict reconstruction, especially United Nations integrated missions and needs assessment

[4] Inadequate data exist to determine how many of the initiatives are ongoing, but UNIFEM is tracking a growing number of experiences in which gender-responsive budgeting is being institutionalized in ministries of finance.

teams, ministries of justice, electoral commissions and truth and reconciliation commissions. Over the multi-year funding framework period, UNIFEM helped to build stronger gender equality dimensions in institutions in 30 crisis and post-conflict countries.

Lessons learned and key challenges

25. Support for gender-responsive budgeting has consistently yielded concrete results in terms of strengthening the internal policies and procedures of government ministries on gender equality. However, institutional transformation is a long-term process requiring long-term commitments, in-depth support and clear benchmarks. That effort could be enhanced through the development of more clear-cut indicators on the process of institutional change in the direction of gender equality.

C. Outcome 3
Gender equality advocates have knowledge and are positioned to spearhead and transform policies, programmes and resource allocations

26. Advocacy for action on gender equality is fuelled by the evolving "architecture" of government institutions, experts, non-governmental organizations and grass-roots organizations that lobby to put women's human rights and development issues on local, national, regional and global agendas.

27. The Fund has been a part of the support system that invests in enhancing the capacity and voice of gender equality advocates. It monitors progress on outcome 3 on the basis of the influence of women's organizations, networks and grass-roots women's groups on mainstream policy processes, including on poverty reduction strategies and on Millennium Development Goal processes and peace negotiations, among other things. The organization also evaluates the extent to which the capacity of national and regional governmental and non-governmental organizations promoting women's rights has increased, as well as the effectiveness of inter-agency thematic groups on gender in influencing United Nations country teams.

28. From 2004 to 2006, UNIFEM supported 94 catalytic initiatives related to capacity development of national, regional and, to a lesser extent, global governmental and non-governmental organizations and networks of gender equality advocates. Those efforts included UNIFEM partnerships with national women's machineries in nearly 90 countries, often through regional initiatives and with existing and aspiring parliamentarians and their networks in 38 countries. The Fund contributed to the establishment or strengthening of more than 50 national and regional non-governmental women's networks and multi-stakeholder groups advocating for women's rights, including through 43 grants in 38 countries from the Trust Fund.

Influence of women's organizations on mainstream policy processes

29. The Fund's engagement with ministries of women's affairs increased significantly during the present multi-year funding framework, compared to the previous one. In part, this results from a stronger focus on multi-stakeholder initiatives in support of implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All

Forms of Discrimination against Women, gender-responsive budgeting and mainstreaming gender equality in Millennium Development Goal processes and post-conflict reconstruction. The Fund supports strengthening women's ministries, positioning them to become the engine of gender mainstreaming with other government ministries and to open up spaces for engagement with women's non-governmental organizations.

30. The Fund works with women's organizations, which may be implementing partners for specific programmes or participants in multi-stakeholder initiatives, and whose members may be grantees. In addition to significant work with national women's machineries, women's parliamentary caucuses and women's regional networks in the multi-year funding framework period, UNIFEM also deepened its work with groups and networks that were run by, or represented, women who were marginalized in their own contexts. They included the following:

(a) HIV-positive women's networks in 14 countries, and regionally in South and West Africa, in the Commonwealth of Independent States and in Latin America and the Caribbean;

(b) Migrant women's networks in Asia and the Pacific and in the Arab States;

(c) Home-based worker networks in Asia;

(d) Indigenous and Afro-descendant women's networks in seven countries in Latin America, and regional networks;

(e) Women's networks advocating for land rights in four countries;

(f) Women's peace networks in 20 countries, and subregionally in the Balkans, the Eastern Caribbean, the Great Lakes and the Southern Caucasus.

31. The Fund supported the development of specific training approaches and modules to strengthen the national and regional capacity of women's organizations. UNIFEM supported training for women to enhance their participation as candidates and voters in elections in 15 countries in 2006. Between 2004 and 2006, with the International Women's Rights Action Watch — Asia Pacific, UNIFEM invested in training non-governmental organization representatives from 46 countries to advocate for and monitor implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women through the project entitled "From global to local". UNFPA joined the initiative in 2006.

Challenges and lessons learned

32. A recent study by the Association for Women's Rights in Development[5] and other data suggest that support for gender equality experts and women's rights organizations at all levels is inadequate. Furthermore, the absorptive capacity of those groups has not expanded in a way that is consistent with opportunities and needs. The Fund intends to significantly focus its support of women's organizations, including by sharpening the mechanisms used to track changes in capacities and influence.

[5] Available from http://www.awid.org/publications/where_is_money/weblibro.pdf.

D. Outcome 4
Harmful and discriminatory attitudes and practices change to promote and protect the rights of women and girls

33. Until support for gender equality and women's human rights brings about changes in attitudes and behaviours at the microlevel, gender equality will remain elusive. There is significant work worldwide on changing attitudes and practices to support gender equality, but methods, tools and data that track their overall impact are largely absent.

34. **UNIFEM contribution to progress.** The Fund tracks progress towards outcome 4 according to the following: the extent to which media and communications portray gender equality challenges and achievements; the effectiveness of campaigns and institutional mechanisms to prevent, reduce and monitor gender-based violence; increases in national institutional mechanisms to prevent, reduce and monitor gender-based violence; changes in gender disparities in wages. Altering attitudes and practices is the most challenging level of change, requiring greater investment in tools and monitoring processes.

35. **Gender-responsive media coverage.** In 2006, UNIFEM supported efforts in 50 countries to enhance media coverage of gender equality issues. Those efforts included national partnerships to support coverage (a) on ending violence against women; (b) on the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS; and (c) on women's roles in peacebuilding. Most of them involve inter-agency initiatives: for example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, UNIFEM coordinates an annual region-wide media campaign that is a collective effort of UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the Pan American Health Organization to highlight the dimensions of gender-based violence in commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women.

36. On a selective basis and to enhance policy and institutional change to address feminized poverty, UNIFEM supports innovative pilot initiatives that demonstrate how to improve women's income-earning options, especially in post-conflict situations. UNIFEM support for widows of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda helped to establish a link between women weavers and a fair trade company that markets their baskets in the United States. As a result, approximately 51,000 baskets have been sold through Macy's department stores in Atlanta, Chicago and New York, and online, generating revenue of $800,000 for Rwandan women weavers. According to the director-general of the Rwanda Investment and Export Promotion Agency, the production and sale of the baskets now provides sustainable support to women in 2,000 communities.[6]

Challenges and lessons learned

37. Specialized skills and tools are needed to document and evaluate the processes that lead to sustainable shifts in attitudes and practices to support gender equality and women's human rights. Further investment in developing those tools is critical given the significant contributions that UNIFEM and others working on gender equality make in multi-media and advocacy campaigns.

[6] See http://www1.macys.com/campaign/rwanda/story.jsp.

III. Organizational effectiveness

38. The five performance goals to track organizational effectiveness are presented in the organizational effectiveness matrix approved by the Executive Board of UNDP and UNFPA in its decision 2004/10. Major shifts in organizational effectiveness resulted from changes in the following: (a) UNIFEM engagement with United Nations reform, particularly the inter-agency coordination initiatives that it spearheaded and the critical guidance from resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system; (b) the use of creative arrangements and partnerships to extend its programming to over 100 countries; (c) the revision or strengthening of organization-wide strategies related to a number of global initiatives, including the Trust Fund; (d) providing in-house guidance and training in results-based management; (e) the revision of the UNDP/UNIFEM operational guidelines; and (f) the introduction of Atlas, the enterprise resource planning system. Each performance goal is further developed below.

A. Goal 1
The coherence, relevance and sustainability of UNIFEM products and services achieve recognition

39. Goal 1 relates primarily to the Fund's role as innovator, catalyst and provider of technical expertise. In tracking progress, UNIFEM monitors the extent to which the initiatives it supports are replicated or scaled up; the extent to which feedback demonstrates the relevance of its products and services; and the extent to which its evaluations are used strategically to generate learning that feeds into more effective action by UNIFEM and its partners.

40. The catalytic and innovative role that UNIFEM plays in promoting action on gender equality is central to its mandate. It carries out that role by piloting initiatives, bringing visibility to the effective innovations of its partners and, through advocacy, placing critical and under-recognized issues that affect progress towards gender equality on policy and programming agendas.

41. Over the past three years, UNIFEM tracked 61 instances in which Governments, non-governmental organizations of entities of the United Nations have replicated or scaled up specific UNIFEM-supported innovations at the local or national level. Of those initiatives, 30 were replicated by Governments, 17 by United Nations entities and 14 by non-governmental organizations or the private sector.

42. UNIFEM produces a wide range of print, audio-visual and electronic resource materials and undertakes campaigns related to the goals and outcomes of its multi-year funding framework, including the biennial publication, *Progress of the World's Women*. During the funding period, UNIFEM produced more than 100 resource materials in 18 languages. UNIFEM also tracks the extent to which the information it generates is picked up by the mainstream media, with over 3,000 articles on work that UNIFEM is supporting tracked throughout the funding period. For electronic resources, UNIFEM regularly tracks data on unique "hits" or visits, including the following:

(a) UNIFEM revamped its website in 2005. The number of hits grew by over 31 per cent, from 17.5 million in 2005 to more than 23 million in 2006;

(b) The UNIFEM portal on women, peace and security, launched in 2003, attracted over 6 million hits in 2006 compared with 4 million in 2004;

(c) The UNIFEM portal on women and HIV/AIDS, supported by UNAIDS, increased the volume of visitors with over 1.9 million hits in 2006 compared to just over 1 million in 2004.

43. Obtaining reliable and up-to-date information on the relevance of its programmes from high quality evaluations and using evaluation findings to improve performance is a high priority for the organization. The Fund engages in three types of evaluations: programme evaluation, thematic evaluation and outcome evaluation. Its internal evaluation policy was revised in 2005 to align with the standards agreed to by the United Nations evaluation group. The Fund undertook 22 evaluations from 2004 to 2006. Of those, 10 met high quality standards while others were of variable quality.

44. External, cross-regional thematic evaluations are particularly important for generating insights and evidence upon which to base UNIFEM future strategies and support. The Fund engages staff and partners in Government, the United Nations and civil society in validating and learning from the evaluations. External evaluations of UNIFEM support in respect of gender-responsive budgeting, implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and enhancement of the gender equality perspective in Millennium Development Goal processes and in HIV/AIDS strategies and programmes have helped UNIFEM to sharpen its strategies and partnerships.

45. More systematic and rigorous tracking of the replication and scaling up of innovation on gender equality is a core competency that UNIFEM plans to enhance. UNIFEM invested in building capacity in gender-responsive evaluation through the African evaluation network during the multi-year funding framework and will build on that strategy in the forthcoming plan. Its partnership with the World Bank on piloting results-based initiatives to enhance women's economic options in five countries dedicates 40 per cent of total resources under the partnership to undertake rigorous evaluation of each pilot. The Fund has also partnered with the World Bank to develop a draft methodology for improving impact evaluation of community-based initiatives to end violence against women supported by the Trust Fund, a methodology which it is committed to further develop in the next four years.

46. The Fund will significantly strengthen its evaluation approaches and capacities in the next four years, working closely with UNDP, its associated funds and other United Nations organizations to ensure economies of scale and alignment with United Nations evaluation group principles.

B. Goal 2
The capacity of UNIFEM programmes is aligned with demand and opportunities to introduce and support innovation, learning and results

47. The Fund assesses progress towards goal 2 by reviewing the outcomes of its engagement with, and influence on, United Nations reform and coordination and by monitoring how a realigned structure helps UNIFEM to better meet demands and opportunities.

48. The Fund engages with United Nations reform and coordination in a variety of ways at the global, regional and national levels, such as chairing and participating in inter-agency initiatives and partnerships including gender theme groups, joint programming in partnership with one or more United Nations organizations and project execution for other United Nations organizations. The Fund also provides technical support or advocacy to strengthen the gender equality perspective in coordination processes, including common country assessments, United Nations development assistance frameworks, the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction strategy papers.

49. In the context of United Nations reform, UNIFEM initiatives to stimulate and support enhanced and more effective inter-agency action on gender equality have increased at all levels, as follows:

(a) UNIFEM was a partner in more than 50 inter-agency initiatives at the field and headquarter levels in 2006, most frequently collaborating with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. Of those, approximately 30 were country-based or regional programmes in partnership with one or more United Nations organizations, with UNIFEM spearheading or playing a coordinating role in approximately 14 instances;

(b) The Fund chairs numerous inter-agency task forces and theme groups. At a global level, it chairs the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality, is the co-chair (with UNDP) of the United Nations Development Group working group on programming policy and has co-chaired (with UNFPA) the Inter-agency Task Team on Gender and HIV/AIDS. At the regional level, UNIFEM chairs the gender and human rights advisory group for the African Regional Directors' Team, the South Asia inter-agency steering committee on trafficking in women and the ad hoc working group on HIV/AIDS and gender for the Caribbean, and it recently handed over the chair of the South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence. At the national level, it chairs 17 gender theme groups and participates in an additional 10 gender theme groups, as well as chairing or participating in at least 20 additional United Nations theme groups on HIV/AIDS, governance, human rights or poverty;

(c) UNIFEM was cited as a leader and partner on gender equality initiatives in 42 of 135 resident coordinator annual reports in 2006 for initiatives in support of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, ending violence against women, including a gender perspective in the response to HIV/AIDS and increasing women's political participation.

50. The Fund tracks annually the number of common country assessment, United Nations development assistance framework, Millennium Development Goal and

poverty reduction strategy paper initiatives for which it provides technical expertise, as shown below:

UNIFEM involvement in coordination mechanisms	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*
Millennium Development Goals	15	32	25
Common country assessments and United Nations development assistance frameworks	14	37	42
Poverty reduction strategy papers	19	18	18

The results of the preceding engagements are variable. When successful, they strengthen the implementation of normative agreements moving towards gender equality, lower transaction costs for Governments and other partners since the United Nations system is working together, and increase investments in gender equality by United Nations system partners.

UNIFEM and the United Nations Development Group Task Team

UNIFEM chairs the 17-member United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality.[a] In 2006, its key achievement was securing the endorsement by United Nations Development Group principals of two task team recommendations, which emerged from enquiries undertaken in 2005 and 2006 and which are focused on strengthening gender equality commitments and programming in the United Nations country teams. The Group's principals endorsed a process to finalize a set of performance indicators that country teams can use to track their progress and enhance their accountability on gender equality programming, as well as the pilot of an action learning process with a small number of country teams to devise United Nations models for integrated, holistic programming in support of gender equality. UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNICEF and ILO are spearheading the work for the Task Team on the two initiatives, with other Task Team members taking the lead in other areas. There is close collaboration between the Task Team and the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality.

In 2006, the Task Team also completed its second gender review of resident coordinator annual reports. The findings were published in the annual *Synthesis of Resident Coordinator Annual Reports* and have led to revisions of the resident coordinator annual report guidelines, which include a specific section on gender equality initiatives for 2007.

[a] The International Fund for Agricultural Development, ILO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, UNDP, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization.

51. In the context of United Nations reform, UNIFEM supports efforts of gender equality experts and advocates in governmental and non-governmental organizations to have a voice in key debates. The UNIFEM Consultative Committee played a catalytic role in commissioning the study entitled "Organizational assessment: UNIFEM past, present and future" (A/60/62-E/2005/10, annex). Its release in early 2005 stimulated dialogue among many constituencies. UNIFEM and members of the Consultative Committee convened numerous sessions with partners, including the first regular session of 2006 of the Executive Board and during the Commission on the Status of Women. Key findings of the assessment were reiterated in the gender equality section of the report of the High-Level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment (see A/61/583) and contributed to stimulating higher-level dialogue on the inadequate funding and positioning of the architecture that supports work on gender equality.

52. Incremental changes in the structure of UNIFEM took place during the multi-year funding framework. Three key developments were the most influential, as follows: (a) revised operational guidelines with UNDP, and the introduction of Atlas, which led to a stronger focus on strengthening and decentralizing certain functions (see goal 4 below); (b) the multi-year funding framework commitment to identify two or three priority countries in each subregion for more sustained engagement; and (c) the development of innovative arrangements for extending the Fund's reach.

53. UNIFEM was able to extend the scope of its activities through a variety of creative and cost-effective mechanisms. In addition to its 15 subregional offices, UNIFEM expanded its reach through cost-shared programming; shared staff and partnerships with sister United Nations organizations (most often with UNDP); subregional programmes that involve multiple countries in particular initiatives; support for Governments and non-governmental organizations through strategic grant-making; and the creative use of volunteers and junior professional officers. UNIFEM estimates that its programming and technical support reached 133 countries during the past three years, including through strategic grant-making and the provision by subregional office staff of technical expertise to national and United Nations partners.

54. Close subregional coordination with resident coordinators has helped UNIFEM to identify strategic opportunities to lend support, sometimes for specific, longer-term programmes, as in China, and at other times for a more limited engagement, as in the case of Pakistan where the resident coordinator requested UNIFEM assistance in undertaking a gender assessment in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake.

Priorities for improvement in the next four years

55. The intensification of United Nations reform raises pressing issues for inter-agency coordination on gender equality. Inter-agency partnerships are most effective when they are focused on specific results. UNIFEM will invest most heavily in existing partnerships that meet the preceding criteria, such as the United Nations Partnership on Sexual Violence. The Fund will also undertake new initiatives where the demand exists, for example on a United Nations system-wide initiative on gender-responsive budgeting, building on its partnership with UNFPA to develop a resource pack on gender-responsive budgeting and women's reproductive rights.

Additionally, UNIFEM plans a significant engagement with the "delivering as one" pilot projects as key sites for testing how the United Nations system will deliver as one.

56. UNIFEM will also build on good practices that have demonstrated cost-effective ways to support greater coordination on gender equality, as in Kosovo, where it is the lead implementing partner for the United Nations country team programme on Millennium Development Goal 3, or in Central America, where it cost-shares gender expertise with UNDP. A key ingredient in being able to align structures to respond to opportunities is to secure the anticipated core funding targets.

C. Goal 3
Strategic partnerships generate new and expanded constituencies and learning for gender equality

57. The indicators for goal 3 refer primarily to the following: implementation of revised agreements to enhance the partnership with UNDP; results of agreements with other multilateral partners; and new opportunities to strengthen partnerships with bilateral donors, the private sector and civil society (partnerships with Governments are covered in the development effectiveness section).

58. UNIFEM, as an associated fund, engages with UNDP in two ways: (a) the Administrator of UNDP is accountable for UNIFEM and, in that context, operational guidelines govern the administrative relationship between the two organizations; and (b) as the United Nations women's fund with a mandate to work across the United Nations system, UNDP can call on UNIFEM to enhance gender equality expertise in the resident coordinator system, in the United Nations Development Group and also, through project execution agreements, as an executing agency for UNDP programmes in UNIFEM areas of comparative advantage.

59. Programmatically, UNIFEM and UNDP strengthened collaboration on strategic issues. According to the report by the Executive Board on the evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP (DP/2006/5), 70 per cent of country offices cited "effective or very effective" cooperation between the two organizations. The partnership with UNDP is multidimensional, including global initiatives such as the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (I Know Politics), the joint partnership on sexual violence, support for UNAIDS on the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS, multiple collaborations in crisis and conflict countries and shared gender equality expert staff in China, Nicaragua and Uganda.

Results of agreements with other multilateral partners

60. In addition to UNDP, UNIFEM continued to partner most frequently with UNFPA and UNICEF. Collaborative efforts also included the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, ILO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, UNAIDS, INSTRAW, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Office for Project Services, OHCHR, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of

Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Africa.

61. In the lessons learned from the strategic business plan 2000-2004, UNIFEM noted the importance of forging stronger partnerships with the multilateral development banks. In that regard, its partnership with the World Bank has become more concrete during the past three years. The following three initiatives were launched:

(a) UNIFEM is executing a component of the Gender Action Plan of the World Bank, focused on supporting replicable results-based initiatives to enhance women's economic options and opportunities in five countries. The goal is to demonstrate strategies that can be scaled up by the Bank;

(b) UNIFEM worked with the World Bank to draft an impact evaluation methodology to assess the effectiveness of community-based initiatives to end violence against women supported by the Trust Fund;

(c) UNIFEM and the World Bank partnered closely on gender equality in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the Great Lakes region.

While the preceding partnerships have yet to yield concrete results on the ground, the systems are being put in place to generate and track them over the next three years.

62. The multi-year funding framework period has also seen partnerships expand with the European Commission, particularly on the gender equality dimensions of aid effectiveness and with the Development Cooperation Directorate of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development through active participation in its governance, human rights and gender equality networks.

Strengthening partnerships with bilateral donors, the private sector and civil society

63. UNIFEM continues to have strong partnerships with bilateral donors and civil society and continues to explore more effective ways of partnering with the private sector. New opportunities that emerged in the 2004-2007 period include the following:

(a) UNIFEM management of a $6.7 million basket fund in Kenya is a new approach to forging a partnership with Governments, civil society and bilateral donors in the context of aid effectiveness;

(b) Three new partnerships with the private sector are notable in the present multi-year funding framework cycle: the Calvert Investment Fund, with which UNIFEM has partnered to launch a set of women's principles to guide corporate accountability for gender equality; Johnson and Johnson, which became the first major private sector contributor to address the interlinkages of violence against women and HIV/AIDS through the Trust Fund; and Macy's Department Store, generating more than $800,000 for women basket-makers of Rwanda;

(c) A private sector/bilateral partnership initiated in the previous multi-year funding framework, between Cisco Systems and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), continued to promote innovation and scaling

up during the current multi-year funding framework. In the Arab States, UNIFEM efforts to ensure that women benefit equally with men from information and communications technology have been expanded significantly. What began as a partnership, in 2001, with the Government of Jordan, Cisco Systems, UNDP and USAID to bring a gender dimension to the CISCO Networking Academy Programme has now been taken to larger scale by the Government of Jordan and is being replicated in Morocco and Lebanon. In Jordan, UNIFEM is now executing an "e-village" initiative as a public-private partnership with the Government and many private sector partners (Microsoft, LEGO robotics, and others). The initiative ensures that rural women benefit from the Government's support of information and communication technology initiatives by bringing technology and training to semi-rural villages that are hoping to attract tourists. Plans are under way to extend the e-village project in Jordan by partnering with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization in implementing mini e-villages throughout the country.

D. Goal 4
Management and administration of financial and human resources are aligned with a commitment to excellence, empowerment and rights

64. Progress was made in several key areas, including the issuance of an instrument of delegations of authority by the UNDP Administrator, for the purpose of bringing up to date and further delegating to the Executive Director of UNIFEM matters concerning its administration and management, the application of that instrument to enhance operational autonomy and effectiveness, and the strengthening and clarification of UNIFEM/UNDP partnerships on operational matters.

Delegation of authority

65. UNIFEM and UNDP worked intensively throughout the period of the multi-year funding framework to update and implement the operational guidelines. Under the delegation of authority the Executive Director of UNIFEM, while remaining accountable to the Administrator, assumes greater authority and responsibility in matters relating to human resources, finance and administration. A simple example of the impact: UNIFEM now has a bank account in three currencies to receive contributions directly. This has enhanced the accuracy and speed of recording contributions.

Human resources and staff capacity

66. The establishment of the UNIFEM Human Resources Centre in 2006 was an important step towards fuller application of the delegation of authority. The Centre has started to improve UNIFEM approaches to and standards for human resources, including enhancing recruitment, the review of contract modalities and the development of strategic learning plans.

67. Enhancing staff capacity is fundamental to continuously improving the ability of UNIFEM to monitor and track results. While reporting has improved in some areas, UNIFEM internal systems and capacities need significant improvement to

enhance both quality and timeliness. UNIFEM has taken a number of steps during the multi-year funding framework period to address this. In 2005, UNIFEM finalized the "Essential guide to results-based management", and a core group of staff, trainers and resource persons in results-based management were identified to act as an internal network of resource persons on the application of results-based management in UNIFEM-supported initiatives. Regional training has been launched to build the capacity of UNIFEM staff and partners, in order to enhance the quality and results-orientation of monitoring and reporting. Annually, UNIFEM staff review multi-year funding framework reports, generate feedback on the content and quality of results-based monitoring and reporting, identify gaps and lessons learned and track progress on follow-up to recommendations from the previous session.

Administration of financial resources

68. The formula for the geographic allocation of core resources was determined by the UNIFEM Consultative Committee at its forty-fourth session in 2004. Non-core resources were utilized geographically and thematically according to the respective donor cost-sharing and trust fund agreements.

69. With regard to total expenditures over the three-year period of approximately $145 million, Africa expended the largest share of core resources (30 per cent), while Asia-Pacific and Arab States expended the largest share of total resources owing to the predominance of non-core resources in that region.

70. With respect to how funds were disbursed among the multi-year funding framework goals, expenditures of core resources were more or less equally distributed. When cost-sharing and trust funds were taken into account, expenditures for governance, reflecting primarily work on crisis and post-conflict reconstruction, represented more than a third of the total at $54.6 million. The multi-year funding framework goals of reducing feminized poverty and ending violence against women received nearly a quarter of those expenditures ($38 million and $33.7 million respectively), and HIV/AIDS had the lowest level at about $19 million or 13 per cent.

71. There are several priorities for improvement in the next four years. For example, many of the dimensions to management effectiveness can be addressed through Atlas. UNIFEM has made good progress in institutionalizing Atlas and developing staff capacity to make maximum use of certain functions. Over the next four years, a high priority is to use the full functionality of the system, especially to ensure that UNIFEM is able to do results-based budgeting.

E. Goal 5
A larger, more diversified and more reliable resource base supports the capacity of UNIFEM to meet opportunities and commitments

72. During the period 2004-2006, the Fund's total resources increased by 14 per cent, from $49.2 million in 2004 to $56.3 million in 2006. UNIFEM raised a total of $160 million over the three years, against a projected $121.3 million anticipated in the multi-year funding framework. The increase was largely the result of the expansion of non-core resources, from $25.9 million in 2004 to $31.3 million in 2006. Nevertheless, core resources increased only slightly, from $23.2 million in 2004 to $25 million in 2006. This is reason for concern, as core resources constitute the bedrock of UNIFEM work and underlies its ability to plan effectively.

73. While the rise in non-core resources was double or triple the projections (depending on the year), the increase in core resources fell short of multi-year funding framework projections.

74. The UNIFEM resource base became more diversified in terms of the number of contributors. In 2006, 54 Governments, 15 non-governmental and private organizations, five national committees and four United Nations entities contributed resources. However, contributions remained concentrated among a few donors, with the largest five government donors contributing about three quarters of the Fund's resources in 2006.

IV. Recommendations

75. **The UNIFEM Consultative Committee, which is comprised of five member States (Estonia, Jordan, Mexico, Norway and Sudan) appointed by the President of the General Assembly, provides key recommendations to the organization each year. At its forty-seventh session, during which it reviewed the work of the Fund in 2006, the Committee made the following recommendation:**

The UNIFEM Consultative Committee,

1. *Emphasizes* that UNIFEM is an essential component of the United Nations gender architecture and of the ongoing United Nations reform effort and recommends that UNIFEM continue to be involved in all such processes. In this respect it takes note of the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment, especially with regard to the section of the report concerning gender equality and women's empowerment;

2. *Encourages* UNIFEM to take active steps, through its participation in the United Nations Development Group to ensure that a gender perspective is fully integrated in the One United Nations pilots, and invites the Administrator, in his capacity as the Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to facilitate the role of UNIFEM in this respect;

3. *Welcomes* the Fund's work as the Co-Chair of the United Nations Development Group working group on programming policy and the Chair of

the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality, and encourages UNIFEM to continue to contribute to the strengthening of the United Nations country teams' coordinated support to countries to advance gender equality and women's empowerment;

4. *Encourages* UNIFEM to continue to provide input to the assessment and preparation process of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations development system;

5. *Requests* that UNIFEM report to the Consultative Committee on the final year of the current multi-year funding framework 2004-2007 at its forty-eighth session, and annually on the upcoming strategic plan for 2008-2011, tracking progress according to the key results and indicators including how it has utilized the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a basis for programming, and commends ongoing efforts to ensure complementarity of the strategic plans of UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF;

6. *Emphasizes* the need for the strategic plan for 2008-2011 to be drafted in close collaboration with Member States, and recognizes the role of the Consultative Committee in facilitating Member States' involvement in providing feedback;

7. *Encourages* UNIFEM to continue to cooperate with all relevant United Nations entities including with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to further promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and continues to believe that UNIFEM should participate on a regular basis in all high-level interdepartmental and inter-agency committees, bodies and meetings, including the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

8. *Further encourages* UNIFEM to continue cooperating with relevant regional organizations, and looks forward to the report of the assessment of this collaboration at its next annual session;

9. *Welcomes* the steps taken by UNDP to create a venue for the Fund's participation in the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS, and encourages the Administrator to make optimal use of the Fund's expertise with respect to the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS;

10. *Welcomes* the secondment of a UNIFEM staff member to the Peacebuilding Support Office for a period of six months, and requests UNIFEM to provide an assessment of the impact of that collaboration;

11. *Notes with appreciation* the report on the implementation of the third year of the multi-year funding framework 2004-2007, and expresses its satisfaction for its focus on outcomes. It encourages current and potential donors to devote a greater share of their contributions to the Fund's regular resources and make commitments to multi-year funding, and further encourages all Member States to fully fund the current multi-year funding framework;

12. *Welcomes* the work of the three UNIFEM goodwill ambassadors, takes note with appreciation of the positive impact of their activities, and looks forward to receiving a brief update report on their activities next year;

13. *Agrees* that, in addition to the biennial UNIFEM resolution, the Consultative Committee will also introduce in the Third Committee of the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, under the agenda item on the advancement of women, a resolution to stagger the election of future Consultative Committee members;

14. *Decides* to convene other intersessional meetings in 2007 as needed.